

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 28, 2025 CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

A REGULAR meeting of the Hopewell City Council was held on Tuesday January 28, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

John B. Partin, Mayor
Rita Joyner, Vice Mayor
Michael Harris, Councilor
Ronnie Ellis, Councilor
Susan Daye, Councilor
Yolanda Stokes, Councilor
Dominic Holloway, Councilor

CLOSED MEETING (Part 1 of 2)

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to move to go into a closed meeting pursuant to Va. Code Section §2.2-3711 (A)(1) to discuss and consider personnel matters, including board and commission appointments; the assignment and performance of specific appointees and employees of City Council and discussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment, and VA Code § 2.2-3711(A)(29) for discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body; and pursuant to Va. Code Section Code § 2.2-3711(A)(8) to consult with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters related thereto and other agenda items. Councilor Daye seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes

Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

WORK SESSION

Compensation Study Guide- Evergreen Solutions

Brian Wolf, a project manager with Evergreen Solutions, provided an update on the compensation and classification study conducted for the city. The study's primary goals were to evaluate internal and external equity, focusing on how departments value jobs and how the city's compensation compares to the external labor market. Wolf reported that the study is in its final phase, which involves drafting recommendations and a final report. During the data collection phase, employees shared positive feedback about the city's work environment, including benefits and leadership, but also expressed concerns about pay, particularly in comparison to the external market and within departments.

Wolf highlighted several key findings, including the city's pay structure, which consists of multiple pay plans across departments, though they are consistent regarding range spreads. The study found that, on average, the city's compensation is below market rates—about 5% below the entry level, 11% below the midpoint, and 17% below the top end. Wolf also recommended consolidating the pay plans into one unified structure for non-public safety employees and revising the pay grades based on internal and external equity. He emphasized the need for a more regular compensation analysis, suggesting a review every two to three years.

Regarding implementation, Wolf outlined three options, with the "hybrid parity" approach being the most recommended. This approach balances tenure and position but comes at an estimated cost of around \$2.1 million. He also discussed the financial implications and the city's ability to fine-tune the implementation process. Wolf concluded by addressing questions from council members, noting the importance of discussing the financial feasibility of the recommendations with HR and finance departments.

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT:

John B. Partin, Mayor
Rita Joyner, Vice Mayor
Michael Harris, Councilor
Ronnie Ellis, Councilor
Susan Daye, Councilor
Yolanda Stokes, Councilor
Dominic Holloway, Councilor

Prayer by Pastor Blow followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilor Holloway.

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to amend the regular meeting agenda to include a special presentation before the Public Hearing. Councilor Stokes seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Councilor Daye seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes

Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

Mayor Partin recognized John Royster for his significant contributions to the city of Hopewell and Fort Lee. Royster, a Hopewell native, and Virginia Tech graduate served as the city engineer and in various other engineering roles for Hopewell before moving to Fort Lee, where he spent over 50 years as the Chief of Master Planning. His work was instrumental in Fort Lee's survival and growth, particularly during the BRAC actions of 1994 and 2005, where he oversaw extensive construction projects totaling over \$1.2 billion. Royster is credited with having personally hired and mentored numerous employees, many of whom advanced to leadership positions. In recognition of his dedicated service, the city presented him with a proclamation expressing admiration and appreciation for his professional and civic contributions. Royster, who is set to retire, was joined by his family and colleagues in this heartfelt celebration, which was a complete surprise to him. The event concluded with warm remarks from Mayor Partin and a request to postpone further agenda items to allow for continued acknowledgment of Royster's achievements.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

1. **Sha'rah Fuller**, a resident of Ward 5 and the Neighborhood Watch Captain addressed the city council, introducing herself and her role in the community. She explained that the Neighborhood Watch meetings held monthly on the first Monday at Wesley United Methodist Church are not council meetings but gatherings for neighbors to connect and discuss ways to support their community. Fuller encouraged everyone, even those outside Ward 5, to attend these meetings. She also mentioned the Hopewell Youth Football League, highlighting the success of the 6U team, which made it to the playoffs. Fuller invited the city to come out and support the children

involved in the league, emphasizing the importance of community engagement and neighbors supporting one another. She concluded by expressing her commitment to keeping the community informed and engaged.

2. **Laura Pitts**, a resident of Ward 3, spoke at the city council meeting about her concerns regarding the operating hours of the community pool. Having been a Hopewell citizen for over 49 years, she expressed her appreciation for the pool and its role in her physical and mental well-being, especially through her regular morning swims. However, she noted that pool hours were reduced after the pandemic, and citizens cannot access the pool until 7 a.m., which conflicts with her work schedule. Pitts requested that the pool be reopened at 6 a.m. for residents, as she believes early morning access is essential for those with busy work schedules. She highlighted that while the swim team occupies five lanes, only one lane is available for the public, which she felt created an imbalance. Pitts acknowledged staffing issues but urged the council to consider her request once the pool is fully staffed. The council members responded sympathetically, with one councilor sharing his personal experience of the importance of early swims for mental clarity and another expressing concern over the current lane allocation.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PH-1 – Epps Property Sale - Charles Bennett, the Director of Economic Development and Tourism, presented a public hearing for the proposed sale of city-owned property to William Lundberg. The property consists of lots 1 to 4 in the National View subdivision, identified by tax ID parcel 0640015. Lundberg, who has been maintaining the land as part of his property for some time, seeks to purchase the land, which is not accessible by public streets and is not buildable due to its terrain. The proposed sale price is \$20,000, based on the 2023 city assessment. The sale has been advertised, and Bennett shared relevant documents, including a real estate purchase agreement. After a brief public hearing, with no comments or sign-ups from the audience, the council moved to approve the sale, pending legal review.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to approve the sale of Parcel # 0640015, containing approximately 0.438 acres, to the adjacent property owner William Theodore Lunsford Jr. Mayor Partin seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

PH-2 – Conditional Use Permit to Construct a Single-Family Dwelling on a Non-Conforming Lot Parcel #013-1210 Atlantic St.- Chris Ward presented a public hearing regarding a Conditional Use Permit request from SRB Investors, LLC to construct a single-family dwelling on a nonconforming lot located at Atlantic Street in Ward 3. The property, which is zoned R-2, does not meet the minimum lot width requirement of 75 feet, as it is only 60 feet wide, but it does meet the minimum square footage requirement. The proposed home is a two-story, three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath, 2,040-square-foot Cape Cod-style house, which is larger than the average home in the neighborhood. The house will feature vinyl siding, consistent with the surrounding homes, and is designed to be in harmony with the neighborhood's architectural style. Ward confirmed the proposal complies with the city's comprehensive plan and that the property would include specific conditions like tree canopy coverage, roof eaves, and foundation specifications. The Planning Commission had recommended additional windows for the design, which the applicant agreed to.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to approve the conditional use permit to construct a single-family dwelling on a non-conforming parcel #013-1210 Atlantic St. Councilor Ellis seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL	Councilor Daye-	Yes
	Councilor Stokes-	Yes
	Councilor Holloway-	Yes
	Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
	Councilor Harris-	Yes
	Mayor Partin-	Yes
	Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to amend the agenda to move the next item of business to R-5. Mayor Partin seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL	Councilor Daye-	Yes
	Councilor Stokes-	Yes
	Councilor Holloway-	Yes
	Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
	Councilor Harris-	Yes
	Mayor Partin-	Yes
	Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

R-5 – MOU of NOVA Aquatics – Lauren Waterworth, Program Manager

Lauren Waterworth, head coach of Nova South Swimming, and Shannon Royster, a fellow coach, addressed the City Council, emphasizing the longstanding partnership between the swim team and the Hopewell Community Center. Nova South Swimming, established in 1969, serves 85 athletes ranging from ages 4 to 18 and has practiced at the community center for nearly 40 years. The coaches highlighted their team’s commitment to providing lifeguards during practices to keep the facility operational for both the swim team and the community. Over the

past two years, they've helped maintain the pool's evening availability for local citizens.

Waterworth expressed a desire for further collaboration, especially in addressing community concerns about access to aquatic programming. She emphasized the importance of their program to Hopewell's residents, particularly those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. She reflected on the positive impact the team has had on its athletes, many of whom have gone on to swim in college or return to the community as employees.

Shannon Royster, a principal at Carter G. Woodson Middle School, echoed Waterworth's sentiments, stressing the team's longstanding role in Hopewell and advocating for the continuation of their partnership with the city. He also called for reconsideration of the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the city, which has reduced lane and usage hours. Royster requested that the MOU be amended to allow for a more flexible arrangement, such as four lanes for the swim team and two for community use. Both coaches expressed their willingness to provide additional lifeguard staffing to support extended hours, particularly in the morning.

Council members discussed possible solutions, including expanding pool hours for citizens and adjusting the MOU to better balance the needs of both the swim team and the community. The council was tasked with working out a mutually beneficial arrangement, addressing both the swim team's operational needs and increasing public access to the pool.

The discussion continues about extending pool hours, particularly to accommodate early morning swim practices that previously started at 4:30 AM. One key challenge is staffing, as the current lifeguards are not local and face logistical issues, such as long commute times. There's a focus on recruiting more local lifeguards and considering creative solutions, like working with HR or offering stipends, to ensure enough staff. Additionally, there's a call for more detailed data on the pool's fixed costs, as the previous presentation did not address these numbers, which are critical for making informed decisions about extending pool hours and managing the associated costs. There's also discussion about the possibility of using city employees for lifeguard duties, but the staffing would still need to meet safety requirements, such as having two lifeguards on deck.

Councilor Ellis emphasizes the importance of coming to a common agreement on the issue, acknowledging that Ms. Martinez and her team have made efforts to

address concerns. He suggests that the involved parties can work out the business and staffing challenges and encourages them to bring back a plan with costs. Ellis highlights the need for collaboration to ensure that children and citizens can use the pool, proposing flexible lane usage based on the number of swimmers present. He urges the group to find a solution and move forward.

Councilor Stokes agrees with Councilor Ellis' points and emphasizes the need for clarity on the number of citizens using the pool during certain times, particularly in relation to the swim team's usage. She requests that while the staff is tracking the pool usage, they should also document how many citizens are using the pool outside of the designated swim team lanes. Stokes acknowledges that it may take some time to gather these numbers and asks for patience. She expresses confidence that the city manager and the involved parties can reach an amicable agreement.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to charge the City Manager and staff to work together on a contract that is mutually beneficial for both the city and the swim team. Mayor Partin seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

Councilor Stokes makes a motion to charge the city manager and staff to present a plan and then sometime in the next 60 days on how to extend the pool hours and provide weekend hours. Councilor Daye seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes

Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to extend the meeting until we finish the regular business items and closed session. Councilor Daye seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

PH-3 – Zoning Ordinance Amendment to add Churches as an allowable use to R1-A District- Chris Ward, Director of Planning & Development

Chris Ward presented a zoning amendment request to allow churches as an allowable use in the R-1A residential district, specifically for the Restored Hope Church of the Nazarene. Currently, churches are not permitted in this district, though they are allowed in other residential and commercial districts in the city. Ward explained that the zoning change would apply across the entire R-1A district, and churches would become a by-right use, not requiring a conditional permit. The Planning Commission had already reviewed the request and recommended approval, with no opposition from the public. Ward clarified that any conversion of a residential building to a church would be subject to development standards, including off-street parking, inspections, and compliance with accessibility regulations. He emphasized that such conversions would be unlikely, as a house is unsuitable for a church without significant changes. The applicant plans to rebuild the church at its previous location, where it had operated for over 40 years before burning down in 2019. A concern about potential tax exemptions for churches was addressed, confirming that churches would remain exempt from real estate taxes.

Councilor Daye makes a motion to approve the request to add churches to section A of article three, a residential low-density district as an allowable use. Vice Mayor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Absent
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

PH-4 -School Board Appropriation- Janel English, Director of Finance/Internal Auditor

Janelle English, the Director of Finance for Hopewell City Public Schools, presented a request for approval of a supplemental appropriation to amend the school's budget by \$3,663,354. This increase is due to additional federal, state, and local grants, as well as corrections to the school's balances. The initial budget was approved by the City Council in May 2024, and a first supplemental appropriation was approved in September 2024. Since then, the school received new grants and needed to adjust carryover amounts for various programs, including Title 1, Title 2, and the Perkins Grant, among others. The increase in grants raised the operating fund by \$3,334,953. Additionally, corrections were made to the textbook fund and food services beginning balances, adding a total of \$356,401 to those areas. After these adjustments, the school's total budget would increase to \$78,777,548. English provided documentation of the school board's approval of these changes and highlighted the amounts needing approval. The request was opened for questions before proceeding with a public hearing.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to approve the resolution to amend the Fiscal Year 2025 Hopewell Public School Supplemental Appropriation as presented. Vice Mayor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

R-1 – Adoption of Economic Development Strategic Plan- Charles Bennett

Charles Bennett addressed council requesting the adoption of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, which he had previously presented in a work session and again on January 14th. He expressed excitement about seeking the adoption of the plan ahead of the city’s first Economic Development Summit scheduled for February 6th at the John Randolph Foundation. Invitations for the summit had been sent to the Council members, and it was also open to the public, with details shared via media outlets and FOIA. Bennett noted that there were still 26 spots available for attendees interested in the provided meals due to room capacity limits. He emphasized that the strategic plan, a 14-page document included in the packet, had been reviewed by most of the Council, and he was now seeking approval, with the option for any changes or revisions.

Councilor Harris makes a motion to approve the Economic Development Strategic Plan. Councilor Holloway seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

R-2 – Penalty and Interest Extension Resolution- Stacy Jordan, CFO

Stacy Jordan addressed council requesting approval of a resolution to extend the deadline for the payment of taxes on public service corporations, tangible personal property, and other items, excluding machinery and tools. He referenced relevant sections of the Hopewell City Charter and the Code of Virginia, which allow the City Council to set due dates for local taxes. Jordan explained that the current ordinance, established in 2006, requires these taxes to be paid by February 15th of the following year. He also noted that there were a couple of minor legal adjustments to the first paragraph of the resolution, which had been discussed with the City Attorney. Jordan asked that the Council approve the resolution with the opportunity to make the necessary legal revisions.

Councilor Harris makes a motion to approve the Penalty and Interest extension Resolution move with the legal changes. Councilor Stokes seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

R-3 – Resolution of Support for WODA Group on New Development- Charles Bennet, Economic Developments Director, Greg Mustric, Woda Group

Charles Bennett and Greg Mustric presented a request to the City Council for a resolution to designate a revitalization area for a mixed-use development on a four-acre parcel in Hopewell. The parcel is located near the Moose Lodge and Food Lion, and is currently zoned as a commercial corridor. The proposed development includes 51 residential units and 6,000 square feet of commercial space. The residential units will range from one to three bedrooms, and the project will be restricted through the Housing Tax Credit program for households earning between 30% to 80% of the area median income. Mustric, representing WDA Cooper Companies, explained that the company has over 35 years of experience and has

developed over 330 affordable housing projects. They also own and operate Friedman Point in Hopewell. The development, called Wells Point, will involve a \$20.3 million investment and is expected to generate an estimated \$54,000 annually in real estate taxes, with a projected increase over time. Additionally, the project aims to hire locally for construction and create commercial space for healthcare and daycare providers. The Council was also informed that the project is part of a competitive process for state tax credits, and obtaining the revitalization area designation will help them secure points for the application.

Councilor Stokes expressed concern about the safety of children in the proposed mixed-use development, specifically regarding its proximity to train tracks. She suggested that additional protections, such as a fence, should be considered to ensure safety, as children might climb over a standard fence. Greg Mustric assured her that the development would maintain the existing tree line near the tracks, and the on-site playground would be fenced in. He also mentioned that their other developments near train tracks had not experienced safety issues, but they would discuss further safety measures with their contractor and architect. Stokes also inquired about the special HUD financing mentioned in the presentation. Mustric clarified that the financing is federal, not HUD-specific, and they plan to apply for it in mid-March. They expect to hear back in July, and if successful, the development could take around 18-24 months to complete. Stokes, having experience in affordable housing, expressed her support for the project, emphasizing its potential to improve the community and generate tax revenue for the area.

Councilor Ellis inquired about the specifics of the loan for the proposed development, particularly regarding any special considerations tied to the loan. The speaker clarified that the financing involves tax credits, which are sold to an investor to provide equity for the development, and the credits can only be used for affordable housing. Additionally, there is a minimum 15-year compliance period with the state, which is typically extended to 45 years, ensuring the housing remains affordable. Ellis raised concerns about the development resembling Freeman Point, questioning its potential negative impact on the area. He expressed dissatisfaction with Freeman Point's condition, particularly in terms of public safety and appearance, despite recent management changes. The speaker responded by sharing that recent visit had shown significant improvements, with maintenance staff on-site and freshly painted corridors. Ellis acknowledged these improvements but emphasized his concerns about the future development, stating that he didn't

envision something like Freeman Point or a hotel for the area. He also raised concerns about the long-term demands a multi-story development could place on the city. The speaker reassured Ellis that the development would be distinct from Freeman Point, with a different design and commercial space on the first floor, which would require ongoing upkeep to meet community needs.

Mayor Partin discussed the results of a recent presentation by Davenport Investments and the Finance Department regarding the city's bond rating. The presentation highlighted areas where the city is performing well and areas for improvement, particularly the median income in Hopewell. The mayor emphasized that raising the median income is crucial for the city's long-term economic growth. He suggested that a mix of 80-90% market-rate apartments with the remainder as affordable housing could benefit the city's economy by improving the bond rating, lowering debt service costs, and avoiding the need for tax increases. The speaker responded that while they prefer a 100% affordable housing model, they would consult with their underwriter about the feasibility of a mixed-income approach. The mayor urged the speaker to explore this possibility and stressed the importance of a development plan that would provide broader economic benefits, even if it meant adding a small number of market-rate units to make the project more competitive.

Councilor Holloway expressed strong support for the proposed affordable housing development, emphasizing the need for such projects in Hopewell, particularly for residents already living in the city who are struggling to find affordable housing. He pointed out that many city residents are facing rental demands that exceed what is necessary to purchase a home, driving long-term residents out of the city. Holloway criticized the focus on wealthier perspectives, urging fellow council members to consider the needs of those with lower incomes. He expressed full support for the mixed-income approach, stressing that affordable housing is essential for the community's growth without displacing current residents. He also praised the work done at Freeman Point and the positive changes implemented there, such as increased safety measures. While he acknowledged zoning and financial constraints related to the number of units that can be built, Holloway remained supportive of efforts to find solutions to create a balanced and accessible housing development for Hopewell.

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to charge The WODA Group and staff to present a revised plan with a split of affordable housing and market rate ratio and bring it back to council for consideration. Mayor Partin seconds the motion.

Councilor Holloway asked for clarification on the proposal being discussed, particularly regarding the request for the designation of a parcel as a revitalization area. The Economic Development Director, Charles Bennett explained that this designation would not directly affect whether the project moves forward but could provide a small advantage in terms of scoring additional points for the application. Mr. Bennett shared his support for the project, emphasizing the significance of this mixed-use development, which includes commercial space and a potential daycare center for families of Fort Gregg Adams. He highlighted the opportunity to replace deteriorating housing and provide better living conditions for 51 families, while also fostering further redevelopment in Hopewell. Mr. Bennett noted personal reasons for his support, such as his son qualifying for housing in the proposed development, and underscored the importance of revitalizing the area for economic growth.

The council discussed a motion to charge the Woda Group and staff with presenting a revised plan for a development, which would include a mix of affordable housing and market-rate units. However, there was concern about whether the motion could legally require an outside agency to provide something beyond their voluntary participation. Mr. Bennett clarified that if the Woda Group doesn't submit a revised plan, there would be nothing for the council to vote on. He emphasized that the project's financial feasibility was tied to the tax credits for 100% affordable housing, and adding market-rate units would complicate funding, as they lacked the necessary financial sources for such a component. The Woda Group further explained that, in their Virginia developments, they typically do not include market-rate units due to the structure of the tax credit system. Council members expressed concern about pushing for market-rate housing, considering the city's need for affordable options. The resolution being discussed was only to designate the site as a revitalization area, not to approve the project itself. Councilor Holloway noted that such discussions revealed important perspectives on the city's future economic growth.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	No

Councilor Holloway-	No
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	No
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 4-3

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to present the resolution to accept the resolution as presented. Councilor Stokes seconds the motion.

Councilor Harris sought further clarification on the motion. He asked if voting to designate the area as a revitalization zone would automatically lead to the development project going forward. The response clarified that the designation would only grant Woda Group five additional points in their application for funding, making it more competitive but not guaranteeing approval. It was emphasized that the project could still move forward without the designation, but the extra points could help secure the necessary tax credits. The conversation also highlighted that even with the additional points, other municipalities with stronger proposals might still win funding. While Councilor Harris expressed his support for revitalization and affordable housing, he noted that the current proposal was not favored by the council. He sought further clarity on how to proceed and voiced concern that the proposed plan might not align with the council's preferences.

Councilor Stokes raised several points during the discussion. She questioned how the first vote, which asks for more information and a revised proposal, would affect the second vote, which involves designating the area as a revitalization zone. She expressed concerns about whether the two votes conflicted or if the first vote would hold up the second. She suggested tabling the vote on revitalization until more clarity was provided on the revised proposal.

However, Councilor Stokes also emphasized the importance of moving forward with revitalization. She advocated for giving the developers a clear answer so they could continue their business and make informed decisions, noting their experience and investment in projects. She highlighted the importance of affordable housing for the community, especially in light of issues like homelessness and the success

of previous affordable housing projects, such as Freeman Point. Her focus remained on ensuring that the city secures the best opportunity for affordable housing for its citizens, particularly those with low to moderate incomes. She concluded by reiterating her commitment to working toward a solution that would benefit the community.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	No
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	No
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	No
Councilor Ellis-	No

Motion Fails 4-3

R-4 - Proposed Schedule for Council Meetings- Dr. Concetta Manker, City Manager

Dr. Concetta Manker presented a new meeting schedule for the Council, outlining changes to the format and times of upcoming meetings. The second Tuesday of each month will include a 5:00 PM closed session, followed by a 6:00 PM Finance Committee meeting, and regular business starting at 7:00 PM. Presentations, public hearings, and work sessions will be moved to this day, though regular discussion will be limited to grant approvals. Concerns were raised by Councilors about the 5:00 PM start time, particularly regarding accessibility for working citizens. It was proposed that the Finance Committee be moved to 6:00 PM to accommodate citizens. After discussion, the Council agreed to begin the new schedule in March, rather than waiting until June. Adjustments will also be made to ensure citizens are not excluded from participation. The schedule aims to streamline operations while addressing time concerns for closed sessions and committee meetings.

The Council discussed the need to revise their rules to reflect the proposed meeting schedule changes. The Mayor suggested that the motion to approve the new schedule should also include a corresponding amendment to update the Council's rules to align with the new times and structure. While the dates for meetings remain the same, the change in meeting times, such as starting at 5:00 PM for

closed sessions and 6:00 PM for the Finance Committee, requires updating the rules. The motion, if passed, would also ensure that the rules reflect these new times and clarify the scheduling of meetings. The Council agreed that a friendly amendment would be added to ensure the rules are revised accordingly.

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to approve the new work schedule as revised by the city manager and to reflect the changes in the council rules and procedures. Mayor Partin seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Absent
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

CLOSED MEETING (Part 2 of 2)

Councilor Daye makes a motion to reconvene open meeting. Vice Mayor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Absent
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE §2.2-3712 (D): Were only public business matters (1) lawfully exempted from open-meeting requirements

and (2) identified in the closed-meeting motion discussed in closed meeting?

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Absent
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to appoint Robert Gains and Matthew Mellon to the Economic Development Authority. Councilor Harris seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Stokes-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	Absent
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,



Johnny Partin, Mayor

Brittani Williams

Brittani Williams, City Clerk